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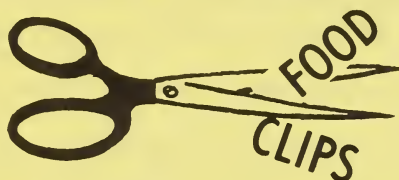
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Food and Home Notes

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Picnic time? Use a good, well-insulated cooler. Use plenty of ice (but not dry ice) to keep foods cold. Even leaving the cooler in a shady spot will help a little from letting the ice melt too fast.

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If you have "leftovers" after your picnic -- check to see that there is sufficient ice left in the cooler to keep leftovers safe and cool 'til you get home.

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Avoid using the same utensils, cutting boards, and counters for both raw and cooked foods unless they have been thoroughly washed -- not just rinsed -- between usages, warns the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Remember that coldcuts and cold-sliced meats should be kept cold (below 40F) and served cold. Do not let these foods reach room temperature.

IF YOU'RE THINKING AHEAD — about strawberries

If you think summer has slipped away -- you're right. It's already time for strawberry lovers to look ahead and think about a site for next spring's strawberry plants. A soil test is important first so that any necessary soil corrections could be made this fall.

The site you select for strawberries should have a pH of at least 5.8. If it doesn't -- fertilizing and liming according to soil test results will bring fertility and pH to proper levels.

Strawberries with their unique, tangy taste are rich in vitamin C. They are grown extensively for market and in home gardens. There are more than 40 different varieties, but whichever is your choice, the time to prepare your soil is NOW. Perhaps a cover crop now would check erosion, retain nitrogen and choke out weeds. And next spring, you'll be ready -- and a good strawberry patch will be your reward.

FOOD — In the Summertime

Many families want something hot at mealtime -- even in the summertime. A hot meat dish is often the answer -- beef, for instance, served in a variety of ways, or perhaps turkey, which is now enjoyed the year around.

For a change of pace, hot split pea soup can be served as the one hot food and be satisfying, too. Besides their good food value, dry peas, from which the soup is made, offers another advantage -- they keep well without refrigeration. So you can buy ahead and have the makings of a good meal on your pantry shelf.

All three -- beef, turkey, and dry peas -- are in unusually good supply this August, say marketing specialists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Red and yellow sweet and tart summer plums, and nectarines, are also in good supply.

* Split Pea soup with franks

1½ cups dry split peas
½ cup onion, chopped
1 teaspoon pepper
5 cups water
½ pound frankfurters, finely chopped
1 tablespoon butter or margarine

Simmer peas, onion, salt, and pepper in water 20 to 30 minutes until peas are tender (for soup they need not be soaked ahead of time). Lightly brown the frankfurters in fat in a frypan; add to soup. Simmer 5 minutes longer to blend flavors.

*Agricultural Research Service, USDA, HG 105

RENT A COW?

Some children have never seen a cow. And some children do not understand where milk comes from -- according to Alaskan Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program leaders. In one remote area of Alaska, the home economists working with Extension programs decided to help low-income children to learn more about cows, milk, and nutrition. School and health officials put on a campaign to "rent a cow" from a farm near Anchorage. The students themselves raised enough money to fly the cow to town and feed it for a week.

The cow was the sensation of the year. Adults and children came to see it -- and to see and learn how important milk is to their diets.

TRAVEL TIME ABROAD?

— Save Time and Money

Before you go -- take time out and find out what you can bring back into the country -- it'll save time and money! Foods and plant and animal products from foreign countries are inspected at the U.S. ports-of-entry by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

It's illegal to bring many types of products into the United States. Why? Because Federal quarantines prohibit bringing many agricultural items into the U.S. because they carry destructive plant or animal pests and diseases.

Just one plant, one small peach, one piece of sausage -- or even a pet bird could be the means of accidentally introducing destructive pests into this Nation. Plant and animal pests and diseases cost Americans over \$12 billion annually.

If you visit a farm overseas . . . inform the customs or agricultural inspector on your return to the United States. Unknowingly, you may have picked up a live-stock disease on your shoes or clothes. If you need to take special precautions to prevent possible infection of animals here the inspector will tell you.

What kinds of things are prohibited? Pine branches, fresh dairy products, cactus plants; coffeeberries, snails, soil, sugarcane, and live insects -- but it depends on what part of the world they originate from.

A new brochure called "Travelers' Tips" is designed to help you clear your luggage through port-of-entry inspection with a minimum of inconvenience. Copies of the publication may be obtained by writing: "Travelers' Tips," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



WATCH OUT —

Chiggers!

Chiggers -- those nasty little red mites -- are found throughout the continental United States. They're around until September, or the first frost. And you can find them almost anywhere outdoors -- in your garden, in the woods or fields. They're so small you can hardly see them without a magnifying glass but they cause intense itching and small, reddish welts on the skin, according to Agricultural Research scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

How can you fight them? You can use a repellent to prevent attacks by chiggers if you go in an area known to be infested. If you didn't know they were there -- and you didn't know you "had been had" by the chiggers, you can reduce itching by bathing and by applying an antiseptic and a local anesthetic to the welts.

Effective against chiggers (for temporary protection) is deet (diethyltoluamide), dimethyl phthalate, dimetyl carbate, and ethyl hexanediol. Apply the repellent to clothing by rubbing it on (but some manmade fabrics may be harmed) or you can apply the repellent directly on the skin -- depending on the conditions listed on the label.

Remember, use insecticides properly -- use them only when needed and handle them with care. Follow the directions and heed all precautions on the labels.

NOTE: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898.
